



Water Quality Assessment for the Development of Total Maximum Daily Loads for *E. coli* Bacteria in the St. Joseph River, Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties

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- B) Previous Data
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 - ii) Segment Survey of the St. Joseph River: Bristol, Indiana to South Bend, Indiana
- C) Quality Assurance/Quality Control Reports for *E. coli* Data
 - i) QA/QC Review Report: IDEM/100/29/477/69/2000
 - ii) QA/QC Review Report: IDEM/100/29/477/070/2000
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 - iv) QA/QC Review Report: IDEM/100/29/477/099/2000
 - v) QA/QC Review Report: IDEM/100/29/477/089/2000

INTRODUCTION

The St. Joseph River drains approximately 1699 square miles in northern Indiana, and 2586 square miles in southern Lower Michigan. This report will focus only on the main stem of the St. Joseph River within the Indiana border. The river enters Indiana in northern Elkhart County and runs for approximately 41 miles before exiting Indiana in northern St. Joseph County. Main tributaries to the St. Joseph River include the Pigeon River, Little Elkhart River, and Elkhart River.

Section 303 (d) of the Clean Water Act requires States to develop lists of impaired waters needing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), and to establish priorities for their development. Streams are to be listed according to the severity of the pollution and the impact on designated uses. Data from Indiana's fixed station monitoring program indicated unacceptable levels of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*) bacteria within the St. Joseph River watershed. As a result, the St. Joseph River Main Stem was placed on Indiana's 1996 and 1998 303 (d) lists.

According to 327 IAC 2-1.5-8 (e)(2), *E.coli* bacteria, shall not exceed one hundred twenty-five (125) per one hundred (100) milliliters as a geometric mean based on not less than five (5) samples equally spaced over a thirty (30) day period nor exceed two hundred thirty-five (235) per one hundred (100) milliliters in any one (1) sample in a thirty (30) day period. In addition, at least one wet weather and one dry weather event was included.

METHODS

Sampling Sites and Locations

An initial water-quality assessment consisting of 16 sites, 11 along the main stem of the St. Joseph River, and 5 on its' tributaries, was conducted between September 27 and October 26, 2000 (Figure 1). One *E. coli* survey (5 samples spaced over a 30-day period) was used to determine if the water quality criteria for *E. coli* were still being violated.

Sample Collection

At each site, *E. coli* samples were collected in sterile 100ml plastic, narrow mouth bottles preserved with Sodium Thiosulfate ($\text{Na}_2\text{S}_2\text{O}_3$). *E. coli* pathogen analyses were performed by Environmental Health Laboratories (EHL) in South Bend, Indiana to meet the six (6) hour holding time requirement (Table 1). During transportation, all samples were stored on ice. Duplicates and blanks were also collected for Quality Assurance/Quality Control.

Field Measurements

Simultaneous with the *E. coli* sampling, standard field parameter measurements were taken with a YSITM multi-parameter water-chemistry analysis unit (Table 2). These parameters included pH, temperature, specific conductance, turbidity, chloride,

St. Joseph River E. coli Assessment

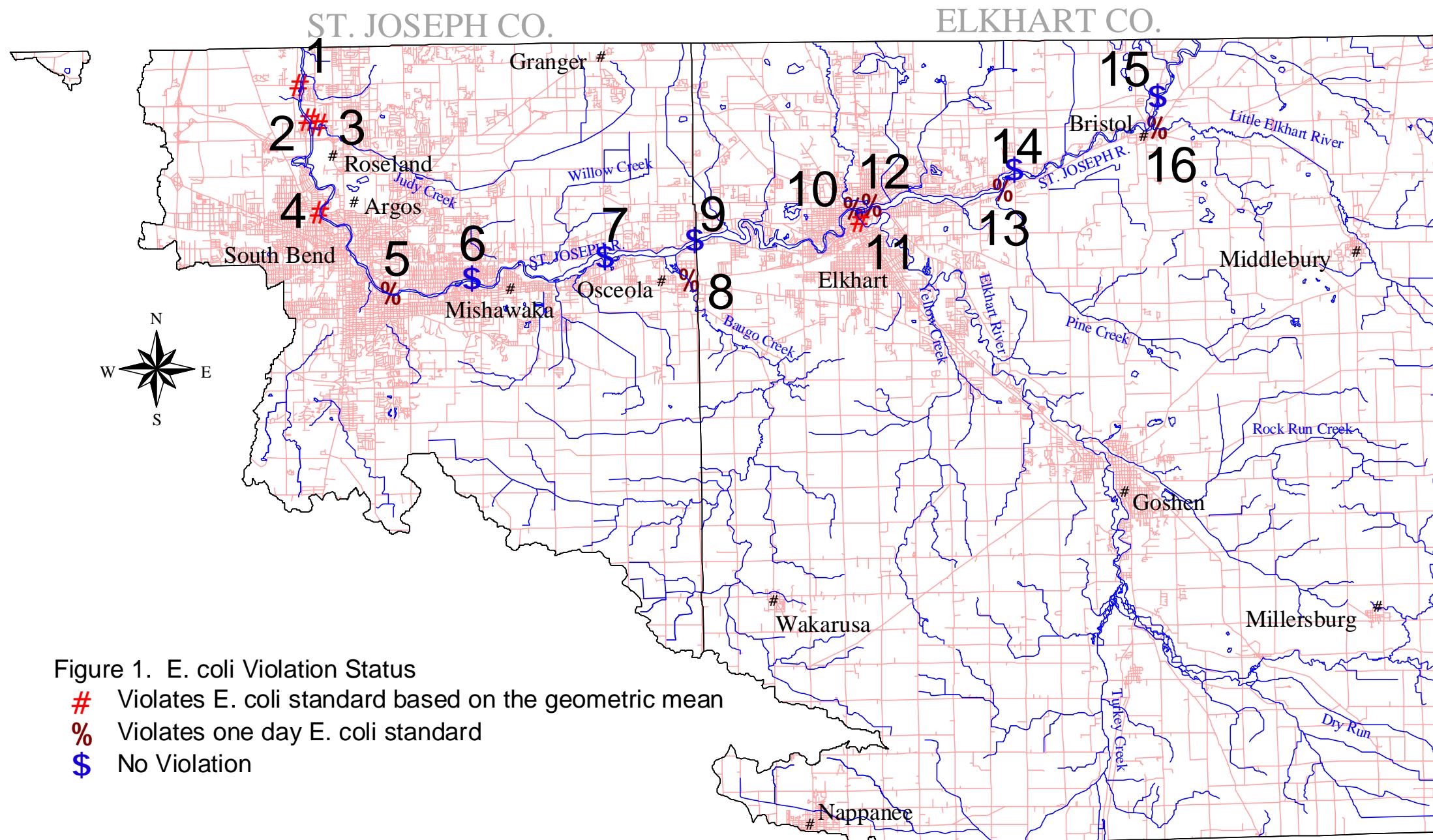


Figure 1. E. coli Violation Status

- # Violates E. coli standard based on the geometric mean
- % Violates one day E. coli standard
- \$ No Violation

